

## [Mary Elizabeth Moore]

October 11, 1939

Mary Elizabeth Moore (Negro)

311 Dixon Street

Charlotte, N.C.

Cora L. Bennett, Writer

Dudley W. Crawford, Reviser

No Names Changed

Mary Elizabeth Moore is one of those kindly souls known by all as "Aunt Jenny" and is a God-mother to all the children in the community. She is the one who is called into the homes when illness occurs, serves as the mother of the church and is a friend to all. Seventy years old, slender and active, she lives alone in a four-room cottage. Her furniture is antiquated, pictures large and small almost cover the walls. Clusters of flowers dot the well-kept yard and an arch of ivy extends over the entrance gate in the white picket fence.

"My life has always been happy even though I was left an orphan. There were three children, one other girl and a boy. We were separated at the death of our parents and taken to different homes. We had an uncle, who let anyone take us that asked for us. When I first remember anything about my childhood I was living in New York City with a rich white family who had taken me to live with them. They say we came from Tennessee, but I don't remember my life there. I was a grown girl before I found where any of my relatives were.

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"This family, Greenlee by name, took me and treated me as one of the family. They taught me to read and write, just as they did their own grandchildren. They had two 2 married daughters. They were quite pleased with my progress and were anxious that I go away to school. I never attended a public school in my life. On Sunday I was sent to Sunday School just an the other children were and when I returned was not allowed to play, but had to spend the evening studying my Sunday School lesson for the next Sunday.

"I was sent to Scatis to school for one year and to St. Augustine for the remaining three years of my schooling. The young man who afterwards became my husband was also a student there. He became an Episcopal Priest and after we were married we went to Jacksonville, Fla. where he served many years. We also spent some years in Pensacola, Fla. While we were in Florida I taught school with my husband. It was a Parochial school and never was I happier than while I taught there. Never was I bored with the work, it meant more to me than the salary that was paid me. Nowadays, most every teacher you see grumbles with being bored by their work and the salary means more to them then anything else. Today schools are so much better equipped then they were when I taught. We taught the children the three R's and the doctrines of the church. Now they are taught so many different things and very often the Bible is left out of the picture completely.

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"When my husband's health began to fail I was advised to bring him to the mountains of North Carolina which I did. He improved for about three years and then all at once he left me. Before he died he told me to come to live near my brother that he might take care of me. That is why I am in Charlotte. But let me tell you there was a man from Charlotte who came to visit at the school often. He asked me if I had a brother in Charlotte and marveled at our resemblance. He said that we were the very image of each other. Finally my brother contacted me and we traced our kinship.

"I had enough money to build this little house and live here very much contented. I amuse myself by working in my flowers- most of them I brought with me from Florida. I read a

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great deal and work in the church, I have a Sunday School class and am never late for church. I have always risen earlier on Sunday morning than any other day in the week. I receive a pension from the Episcopal Church which enables me to live comfortable.”